



COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL SERVICE AGENCY 7

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Good Afternoon, Co-Chairs Representative Kitchens and Senator Olsen, and the Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding.

I am Jeff Dickert, the Agency Administrator of Cooperative Educational Service Agency #7 better known as CESA 7.

I want to thank you for coming to our region to hear from many educators that are very interested in the funding formula and what a change to it could mean for our Children in Eastern Wisconsin and across the State.

Let me give you a little background, CESA 7 serves 37 Public Schools and the Oneida Nation School District. Our region starts from the smallest Public School District in Wisconsin at the tip of the thumb of Door County called Washington Island and covers Door County, follows the Lakeshore South to Kewaunee County, then Manitowoc County, and furthest south to Sheboygan County and swings west and north to Calumet County and lastly Brown County. The Region covers over 87,000 students and over 8,000 teachers. CESA 7 is a Governmental Intermediate Agency working between our Member School Districts and the Department of Public Instruction. We receive no State Aid, so we are quite entrepreneurial working in education training and professional development, coaching in the classroom, implementing DPI initiatives, providing software support, and even trying to save the districts money through cost saving cooperative programs such as contracting for Specially Trained Employees such as Occupational Therapists, Visually Impaired Therapists, and other specialists, as well as Health and Dental Insurance Programs, and other vendor products. And I always make it clear that we work with our Member School Districts, but that we have no authority over any of our Member School Districts.

Also to give you a little background, I have been a teacher/coach for 10 years, a Principal for 3 years, a Superintendent for 17 years, and the CESA 7 Agency Administrator completing my 10th year. For 40 years, I have been able to do the work I love, contributing in a small way to educating the youth of Wisconsin.

Today you will hear a lot of issues concerning our current funding system and ideas on a new Funding system. Please understand that the educators and citizens you will hear from today are very passionate about doing what is best for our children, our future for a strong Wisconsin, and the United States. I will let them talk about the details of how the funding system effects their operations and they can give you specific ideas on how to

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resident student from another District in their program and the Home District would get to count that Senior as a 1.25 FTE student on their Revenue Cap. Sharing this late in a student's career does not appear as an open enrollment threat.

Career areas in the program would be decided by and adjusted annually by the Department of Administration. Seniors would be transported or receive a stipend for travel and would work hard in their studies in the many identified shortage areas, such as nursing, teacher, CNC Machine Operator, welder, computer coder, computer systems engineer, civil engineer and the many facets of engineering, just to name a few. Seniors would all be back at their High Schools by 3:00 p.m. to part-take in their extracurricular activities such as Forensics, Wisconsin Academic Decathlon, Yearbook, and of course athletics – all the places where they learn the soft skills of teamwork, determination, being on time, decision making skills, and a lot more. After all, they are still High School students.

This system would provide a lot of winners. Students win by not wasting their senior year and get one free year of college or training for a profession; parents win as they save one year of college expenses; K-12 School Districts win by advancing their Senior's like never before in the history of this great State; the Technical Colleges and Universities win as they advance our next generation of citizens and workers and provide a clear track of success for each student. Lastly, our State wins with a better trained, coordinated workforce produced by the same systems they have currently in place - without a total redesign.

In summary, if we leverage the systems we currently fund and have in place, we target fund like the suggested program I just spoke about, any change can be implemented in a very short time. I feel target funding using our current systems will create processes of success that we all are seeking.

Thank you for your time today. If CESA 7 can assist you in any of your future work, please feel free to contact me.

Jeff Dickert, Agency Administrator
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